

uniformly onto [the] its internal wall over its entire circumference; [in that]

extracting excess sprayed power material [is extracted] from inside each of the container bodies;

returning the excess sprayed powder [and is returned] back [toward] through the welding machine; [,] and

reducing [in that] the gap between [the] successive container bodies [is reduced] in the region of the spray [process] apparatus.

Claim 2, line 2, delete "coating" and insert -- powder --.

Claim 3, line 2, please delete second occurrence of "the" and insert -- each --; and delete "coating" and insert -- powder --.

Claim 4, line 2, please delete second occurrence of "the" and insert -- each --; and delete "coating" and insert -- powder --.

REMARKS

The claims presented for prosecution in the application as amended are 1 - 4. These claims are directed to a method for coating open-ended container bodies and recovering unused coating material.

Claims 1 - 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 4, 615, 915 to Takeda et al. ("Takeda"), in view of U.S. Pat. No. 4, 324, 818 to Sendzimir ("Sendzimir"), in view of U.S. Pat. No. 4, 869, 201 to Takahashi ("Takahashi"). Amended claim 1 of the present invention recites a method for coating the interior of container bodies where powder material is fed through a welding machine to the end of a spray apparatus, and then sprayed inside each container body. Excess powder which does not adhere to the container bodies is then extracted back through the welding machine. The gap between